AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert the following section heading before the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 1 :

-- FIELD OF THE INVENTION --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The present invention relates to a multilayer decoupling and sealing system, in particular for laying ceramic paving by using a thin-bed method~~, as defined in the preamble to Patent Claim 1~~. --

Please insert the following section heading before the paragraph beginning at page 1, line ~~6~~ 5 :

-- BACKGROUND --

Please insert the following section heading before the paragraph beginning at page 3, line ~~14~~ 13 :

RB 2-12-10

-- SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION --

Please delete the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 20.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page ~~8~~ 7, line ~~1~~ 25, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- In another arrangement, it is conceivable that the decoupling and sealing system can be laid rigidly, ~~preferably~~ in one embodiment cemented, on a substratum. This results in more secure attachment of the decoupling and sealing system, should this be both permissible and useful because of the properties of said substratum. It is also conceivable that the sealing layer be formed by an anchoring layer of a non-woven material that is impermeable to liquid. Because of its structure, such an anchoring layer bonds particularly well to the substratum, and is familiar in principle.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line ~~16~~ 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- In another configuration, in order to enhance the sealing effect, the sealing layer can be of polymer sealing layer, in particular a polyethylene sealing layer that is already known in principle. It is also conceivable that the sealing layer have non-woven material, at least underneath, in order to anchor it to the substratum, ~~preferably~~ in one embodiment to anchor it to an adhesive in the case of a rigid installation.--

Please insert the following section heading before the paragraph beginning at page ~~10~~ 9, line ~~8~~ 22: 2-10

-- BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page ~~10~~ 9, line ~~8~~ 22, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- ~~A particularly preferred~~ One embodiment of the decoupling and sealing system according to the present invention is shown in the drawings appended hereto. These drawings show the following:--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line ~~10~~ 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- Figure 1: a cross section through a decoupling and sealing system according to one embodiment of the present invention, which shows the layered structure; --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line ~~13~~ 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- Figure 2: a plan view of a decoupling and sealing system according to one embodiment of the present invention, as shown in Figure 1; --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line ~~16~~ 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- Figure 3: the arrangement of overlapping areas for the reinforcing layer and the sealing layer on a decoupling and sealing system according to one embodiment of the present invention, as shown in Figure 1.--

Please insert the following section heading before the paragraph beginning at page 10, line ~~25~~ 15:

-- DETAILED DESCRIPTION --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line ~~25~~ 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- Figure 1 is a cross sectional side view that shows the layered structure of a multilayer decoupling and sealing system 1. Figure 2 is a cross sectional plan view at the level of a sealing layer 4, and Figure 3 is a plan view of the decoupling and sealing system 1, in cross section along the reinforcing layer 5. In Figure 1, the decoupling and sealing system 1 according to one embodiment of the present invention is shown installed on a substratum 15, for instance in a cement screed or the like. Tile paving made up of tiles 10 can be seen above the decoupling and sealing system 1, and this is laid in tile mortar 12 by the thin-bed method. The joints 11 between the individual tiles 10 are similarly filled with tile mortar 12.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line ~~27~~ 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- Figure 4 shows another configuration of the decoupling and sealing system 1 according to one embodiment of the present invention, in which there is no vapour pressure equalization layer 6; in place of the sealing layer 4 there is only a layer 13 of non-woven material that is to be laid on the substratum 15. Because of this, the formation of the decoupling and sealing system 1 can be made even simpler for substrata that are not affected by moisture, for instance

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please add the following new paragraph beginning at page 1, line 1, after Title: 2-12-10

-- RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a US National Phase of PCT Application No. PCT/DE2004/002470, filed 05 November 2004, which claims priority to German Application Nos. DE 203 17 248.5, filed 06 November 2003 and DE 10 2004 026 652.2, filed 01 June 2004. Each of these applications is herein incorporated in its entirety by reference. --